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MARSDEN ROCK:

*Sam^d Darby given by J^r Thompson
1773*

A P O E M.

By P. T. of Malton.



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MARSDEN ROCK, &c.

HOW from Northumbrian hills, a youthful band
Of guardian swains, with each his nymph in hand ;
Touch'd by the impulse of th' Idalian boy,
Romantic nature, and the social joy,
Sped to the brink of undulating Tyne,
Seiz'd the light bark, and thro' the foaming brine,
Her canvas to the breeze unfurling, bore
The beauteous freight to Marsden's rocky shore, }
Where storming winds, and surging billows roar,
Well pleas'd I sing :—O thou the strain inspire,
Whose glance then warm'd me, with its tend'rest fire !

Immortal shade of each immortal name,
That shines recorded on the rolls of fame,
From those ætherial mansions where you rest,
Star-crown'd, in pomp of virtuous glory blest,
Propitious smile ! nor to a panting muse,
A portion of your genuine flame refuse.—
If yet your glowing breasts, the powerful charm
Of nature, or of graceful beauty warm,
O nerve her wing to gain parnassian flowers,
And tune her doric reed to notes like your's !—

And you my jocund mates, whose genial glee,
Temperate, yet as the roving zephyr free,
Cheer'd our gay voyage, while th' expanded blue,
Heav'd in soft concert to the joys we knew :—
Ye chief, fair tribe ! without whose cordial smile,
Nature were languid, life a joyless toil,
Dull to your shepherd's sense ;—O form my lay,
To match the transports of that halcyon day !

Nor be thou absent, hospitable power !
But for a moment, from thy favourite bower,
From Dent's Hall, where by thee, the decent board,
With what the varying season yields, is stor'd ;
Indulging—happy dome ! without controul,
The feast of reason, and the flow of soul :

Haste

Haste thee—and from thy green abode bestow
One laureate wreath to deck the poet's brow !

Thee too, from whose expressive tints, the muse
Enraptur'd catches her enchanting views ;
By whom revived, her soft sensation flow,
Beam in her eye, and in her bosom glow :
Wilt thou, O memory ! thy influence deign,
And with thy mild effusions, warm her strain ?
Wilt thou again the laughing hours restore,
Each scene revisit, and each haunt explore ?
At thy command, again the shifting sail,
Exulting, swells before the driving gale :
Again the landscape charms the ravish'd eye,
The hugerock tow'ring, roughens on the sky ;
Again the sweet repast, the smiling hours,
And all the music of the woods are ours. —
O come ! and give each image to assume,
Trac'd by thy soft'ning hand, a milder bloom.

Aurora now, fair daughter of the dawn,
Sprinkled with rosy light, the dewy lawn,
And thro' the air, refreshing breezes play,
To cool the lion's heat, and dog-star's ray :
Now on the western hill, bright Phœbus gleams,
A crimson radiance from his level beams ;
When the gay crew at Dent Hall's verdant bower,
To Neptune first, a due libation pour,
Warn'd by the matron of that lov'd abode,
To seek the favour of the wat'ry god : —
He with glad omens, every doubt beguiles,
And on the blithsome freak, benignant smiles ;
The bounteous dame provides, with pleasing care,
Delicious viands, and the beverage rare ;
Then to their joys resigns the youthful train,
Each blooming damsel to her guardian swain :
“ Go now, (she said) and while your vernal day,
“ Smiles on you—speed the dancing hours away ;
“ Be yours, the unblemish'd happiness, that crowns
“ What virtue sanctifies, and reason owns ;

“ So

" So may your life remain one cloudless scene,
 " Its morning chearful, and its eve serene:
 " I, also once, this frolic impulse knew,
 " While buoyant youth was mine, and life was new;
 " But now a longer length of graver years,
 " Have cool'd my fancy, and increas'd my fears;
 " No more my slack'ned nerves again may dare
 " The day's long ramble, or nocturnal air.—
 " Then leave me here, and rove where nature charms,
 " Till night restore you to my longing arms."

She ceas'd—while every bosom own'd the flame
 Of grateful rev'rence, for the indulgent dame;
 We yield regretting to her tim'rous prayer,
 And eager to the winding shore repair,
 Launch the tall pinnace—spread the flying sail,
 And down the flowing Tyne pursue the gale:
 Safe bounds the vessel o'er the heaving tides,
 While beauty animates,—and Thompson guides!
 Pilot thrice tried!—what thanks to thee belong,
 Whose name the muse selects to grace her song!

Now from their coral beds the Næiads rise,
 And gambol round us as the pinnace flies,
 Their tresses sleek, adown their shoulders flow,
 And their sonorous shells the Tritons blow:
 To Tynemouth port our eager course we ply,
 And woods and vills roll backward as we fly;
 Fair woods and vills! whose beauties who shall tell,
 Pride of Tyne's rolling stream—a while farewell!
 Adieu Dent's Hall!—thee last our wishful eyes,
 And all thy groves, saw vanish in the skies.

Far from the scooping shore, we jovial sweep,
 And tempt with bolder prow, the hoary deep;—
 Where the breeze wafts,—and steady Thompson guides,
 Our fearless rudder plows the curling tides;
 Gains on old ocean—while each timid fair,
 With glist'ning eye, bespeaks her shepherd's care.
 Now Shields black smoke far scouling, rise to view,
 Past Shields black smoke with lashing oars we flew,

Gain

Gain Tynemouth port—there anchoring—take a stock
 Of Nect'rous juice, to quaff at Marsden Rock :
 O'er Tynemouth bar, then shoot our bark again,
 The dread of sailors on the wintry main;
 Where, as the whirling eddies, threat'ning, rise,
 On each soft cheek, the live Carnation dies;
 And the nymph closer to her guardian flies. }

Now high in air, hills beyond hills arise,
 And only bounded by yon azure skies;
 Fam'd Cheviot, high above the rest, who shrouds
 His tall ærial brows, in ambient clouds.—
 Last gradual from the jutting cliffs expand
 The dreary, shelving shores of Sunderland;
 Obdurate shores, from whose horrific gloom,
 The bark assiduous sheers, or meets her doom;
 Divinely shunn'd! for Venus, heavenly fair,
 With anxious haste, protects her peerless care;
 From Ida's top, th' erroneous course descries,
 *And speeds her white-wing'd handmaid from the skies;
 "Seest thou yon bark, with waving streamers bland,
 "Fly, turn its rudder from yon fatal strand."
 She spoke,—and to the waving streamers gay,
 Th' obedient vision wings her rapid way;—
 Lights on the mast, and from her hov'ring plume,
 Shook spicy fragrance, and the spring's perfume:
 Which o'er the crew's delighted senses stray'd,
 And wak'd attention to the guardian maid.—
 "Ye daring swains forbear, nor further brave
 "These coasts disastrous, and the turbid wave;
 "Forbear the devious course—nor rash disdain
 "The fond protection of the paphian queen:
 "But, where my parting flight your pinnance guides,
 "With blending oars compel the smoother tides:
 "So shall you joyous, every danger past,
 "Attain the wish'd for Marsden Rocks at last;

* This alludes to a white butterfly, that lit upon the sail, when six miles from shore.

"Such

"Such is the boon obtain'd from ruling Jove,
 "The firm decree of him who reigns above."

She said—and from the mast departing flew,
 Where grateful, we the radiant track pursue,
 With sprightlier sail the liquid azure sweep.
 And dash with quick'ned oar the sparkling deep:
 Diminish'd Cheviot hides his sinking head,
 And soon we hail Marsden's white rocky bed;
 Consign the lighten'd bark to Neptune's care,
 And to the wild romantic scene repair.
 Thrice welcome hail! ye sympathetic gleams,
 Ye rocks, ye waving shades, and cooling streams!
 O while beneath your shelter, I recline,
 Calm contemplation's sacred hour be mine;
 To me more grateful, than the sumptuous tide
 Of midnight revel, and the glare of pride!
 Far, far escap'd from all the world's vain noise,
 Its grov'ling passions, and illusive joys;
 O let me here, my fetter'd thoughts release,
 And charm'd with nature, sooth my soul to peace!

Now to a cavern'd rock, the train remove,
 And the close shelter of a pensile grove;
 Where on the winding sides, the viands plac'd,
 We sat, regaling on the rich repast;—
 The plenteous treat delicious melons crown,
 In Emmerson's exuberant gardens grown:
 The downy peach, the plumb, the melting pear,
 And all the flavor of the fruitful year!—
 Brisk flows the goblet round the festive throng,
 And with inspiring juice, awakes the song;
 The flute accompanies the vocal lay,
 And the birds carol it from every spray.——

Then rise, exhilarate, the sportive band,
 When each young swain, his blushing partner's hand
 Seiz'd with soft pressure,——and selected, rove
 The vale sequestered, or the shady grove;
 Now climb the summits where the eagles soar,
 And now the hermit's lowly cell explore;

Or from the opening glades, afar survey
 The tufted islands, and the circling sea ;
 Here Nature's hand unrivall'd acts her part,
 And mocks the chissel's—mocks the pencil's art ;
 Here turns her arch, here bids her columns rise,
 Here scoops the gelid grot's capacious size,
 And piles the cliff tremendous to the skies ;
 Lo, here Lot's wife, her petrid stature rears,
 And her wan cheek distains with marble tears ;
 Encouraged by the fair, we range the shore,
 And all the haunts of blameless Pan explore ;
 Till Laburn's vaulted Cellar yields awhile,
 A cooling respite from the pleasing toil ;
 Where on the sea-bleach'd rocks we careless lay,
 And glad review th' adventures of the day ;
 Again we drain the rich nect'rous bowl,
 And to gay converse, wake th' impassion'd soul.

But Phœbus now shoots forth a western ray,
 And from the mountains, calls the ling'ring day ;
 When straight the festive band their bark regain,
 And urge her homeward o'er the limpid plain :
 Safe at Dent's Hall arriv'd, the youthful crew
 Hail the glad matron, and the feast renew,
 Recount each scene—nor check the pleasing tale,
 Till the dull evening's thick'ning shades prevail.

Then breath'd the muse one ardent wish, before
 Again we sought the beach, and seiz'd the oar,
 " Farewell Dent's Hall, thrice happy clime, farewell !
 " Where rosy health, and concord love to dwell !
 " Adieu, sweet bower——adieu, ye winning fair,
 " Whose image from my breast, no time shall tear !
 " O would the gods indulge one fond request,
 " And raise Elysium in my favour'd breast ;
 " Deep in the winding vale estrang'd from strife,
 " Be mine the pleasures of the rural life,
 " Be mine, like Emmerson's, the sylvan bower,
 " Pomona's treasures, and the genial hour !
 " But chief whate'er my state——where'er I dwell,

" Or

" Or in the swarming town, or rural cell,
 " Whether I breathe my native air, or rove
 " Where the parch'd Indian seeks the citron grove,
 " Once firmly fix'd, O let me ne'er resign
 " The soul united, and attun'd to mine,
 " The gay companion, and the faithful friend,
 " To share my transports, and my cares unbend.
 " Then shall my little bark, with prosp'rous gale,
 " Adown life's fleeting stream, securely sail;
 " Her steadfast course, with temperate joy pursue,
 " No flattering calms deceive, no storms subdue;
 " Blest with a pilot, to conduct my care,
 " As Thompson faithful—and as ———— fair!"

I ended, and the sympathizing crew,
 Reluctant, bid Dent's Hall—a long---adieu!
 Regain the vessel, coast the winding strand,
 And on thy Key, Newcastle, safely land:—
 Then from the parting fair, the suppliant muse,
 Warm for one chaste approving rapture sue,
 " Bright charmer hear—nor this request deny,
 " One last embrace?—then bid your vot'ry fly:"
 She, cruel beauty! grants but half the prayer,
 The rest, the winds disperse in empty air;
 Away all to their downy couches file,
 But *Wensley* and the muse—they seek Carlisle.

F I N I S.

